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AUTOLYCUS
OR
THE FUTURE FOR MISCREANT YOUTH

TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

*For a full list of this Series see the end
of this Book*

AUTOLYCUS

OR

THE FUTURE FOR MISCREANT YOUTH

"Littered under Mercury, a snapper up of unconsidered trifles,
Beating and hanging are terrors to me; for the life to come
I sleep out the thought of it."

—*A Winter's Tale*, Act IV, Scene 11.

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AUTOLYCUS
OR
THE FUTURE FOR MISCREANT YOUTH
CHAPTER I
CRIME

What is crime? At first sight this must seem an easy question to answer, and yet, if we cast back over history and compare the customs of one country with those of another, we find remarkable divergencies. What is here regarded as vice is there regarded as virtue. That is why immigrants so often come up against the laws of their new country. How would the devout, but uninstructed, servant of Islam understand the crime of bigamy and our amused tolerance of the inebriate? This incoherence of ethical standards is indeed obvious in all branches

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of life. Eugenics, bodily and mental hygiene and social reform are all great ideals, but how often is the apparent curse of one generation regarded as a blessing by the next! Consider, for example, the draughts from open windows which were so heartily condemned by our ancestors. Once upon a time when a new out-patient department of a children's hospital was being built, it was suggested that a blank space on the wall should be filled by therapeutic texts. The medical staff hailed the suggestion with acclamation and the tubercular enthusiast straightway demanded that the legend at one end should read: "Stuffy rooms and closed windows mean tuberculosis". A colleague immediately rose and insisted that at the other end there should be inscribed: "Damp and draughts from open windows lead to rheumatism".

The definition of what constitutes crime has always varied considerably between nation and nation, and from century to century. From the earliest time the Egyptian has believed that when he

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dies he will be called upon to account for his life's behaviour before the judges of the dead. Three thousand years have not altered the heinous nature of diverting his neighbour's share of the inundation of the Nile to his own uses, whereas bribery, corruption and theft have become much more venial offences, especially since the land has been under the control of the foreigner, be he Arab or Briton. In our own legal constitution, since we are a commercial nation, crimes against property still bulk most largely, and, except for murder, are punished most severely, while crimes against the person, particularly if they only be against what we may call the soul, are regarded much more leniently. This was brought home to many people in the Hayley Morris case in which the sentence seemed to some people absurdly inadequate. Much ink and acrimony have been expended over this matter, and it is only mentioned to point out that our notions of what crime is and how serious a given crime may be, are not coherent nor finally determined. Some regard crime from

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the standpoint of the lawyer and some from that of the moralist, and they will not agree, for when the representatives of heaven and hell referred to the courts a dispute as to the repair of a crack in the floor of heaven whereby the angelic harps were tarnished by the escaping sulphurous fumes, the case was remanded no less than three times and finally abandoned because the representatives of heaven could not find a lawyer to prepare their case.

We have not altogether left behind the feeling that offence against the Gods is the worst crime of all, for thereby the whole tribe is in danger of their wrath. Such crimes in olden days were expiated by the sacrifice of the offender to the offended deity, were the former man or beast, stick or stone. It is recorded that the citizens of Bubastis lynched a Greek soldier because he killed a sacred cat, thus placing themselves on the side of the angels and becoming the fathers and mothers of all heresy hunters. The victim of such a crime is not dealt with by reason and equity, but by emotion

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and violence. This may explain the anomaly of the English law which considers the child of seven as wholly responsible for his actions. This is logical if the child is a deodand and forfeit to the gods who have been outraged, but psychologically it is indefensible.

But it is submitted that when we deal with children the type of crime is of little account in our estimation of the case. If we are to progress we must go back to Samuel Butler. It is nearly sixty years since he wrote: "In that country if a man falls into ill health or catches any disorder he is tried before a jury of his countrymen and if convicted is sentenced more or less severely as the case may be. If a man forges a cheque or sets his house on fire or robs with violence from the person, he is either taken to a hospital and most carefully tended at the public expense, or, if he is in good circumstances, he lets it be known to all his friends that he is suffering from a severe fit of immorality".¹

¹ S. Butler, *Erewhon*, London: A. C. Fifield, 1919, p. 99.

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At the time, those who knew of or troubled to read Butler's works dismissed his remarks as the phantasies of a cynical satirist. Now we are not so sure. In this era of preventive medicine, disease is in many cases held to be a crime, and we are just beginning to wonder if it may not perhaps be that crime is a disease.

After all, our conception of disease is changing ; the obvious symptoms are no longer the only objects of our regard, for we realize that they are but the necessary sequelae of a failure in the harmonious reactions within that physical and mental commonwealth which is the living human personality. So with crime, it is no longer the theft, the assault, which is interesting us so prominently, it is the failure of reaction between the individual and society which demands our attention as the cause of these symptoms, and makes us realize that the disease exists not always or only in the individual delinquent but sometimes in the body politic itself.

Many factors enter into the picture,

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and the search for the causes which we must undertake may be long and involved. In an inquiry into juvenile crime in certain European countries, it was found that while theft, assault, and sex-offences did not vary much from country to country or from race to race, the crime of arson which was almost negligible in other countries, in Hungary assumed almost alarming proportions—the camp fires of a gipsy race. Again, Mrs Smith comes to the hospital and tells us: "Our Emily can't tell the truth because she has got adenoids", and if she were right, what then? It does not matter that the race-old propensities of a unique inheritance amongst the European nations lead to setting stacks alight or to killing cows, what we must consider is how to direct these racial propensities into desirable instead of undesirable channels. If it were true that the moral 'spiritus' as well as the vital 'spiritus' were obstructed by adenoid vegetations, our object must be not to concern ourselves with the prevarications of the one or the stridor of the other,

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but to remove the obstruction. In law as in medicine diagnosis has gone wrong. In the latter Galen was responsible for directing our attention to the names of diseases and away from the personalities of our patients, and the culmination is reached in the official nomenclature of diseases whereby all medicine is stultified. As Dr Crookshank¹ has pointed out, neither the object nor the process of diagnosis is comparable to the identification of a postage stamp by reference to a collector's catalogue. The real diagnosis is made by the cat who feels ill and seeks and finds the grass that cures. So with crime, nothing is to be gained by docketing so many cases as theft, so many as assault, so many as truancy, and so on; we want to find out what is the reaction of the individual to the environment which produces just that undesirable behaviour, and, still more important, under what circumstances the same reaction may become desirable.

¹ F. G. Crookshank, *Diagnosis and Spiritual Healing*, Psychic Miniatures, No. 6. Kegan Paul, London, 1927.

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The point which must never be forgotten is that a given crime represents not one impulse and its inevitable reaction, the same in every individual, but may be the outcome of impulses with no seeming connection with the behaviour at all. Take theft as an example. As Mr Lee says, predatory behaviour is perfectly normal in the healthy boy at what he calls the 'Big Injun' age.¹ Hear the words of St Augustine: "A pear tree there was near our vineyard laden with fruit, tempting neither for colour nor taste. To shake and rob this some lewd young fellows of us went late one night (having according to our pestilent custom prolonged our sports in the streets till then) and took huge loads, not for our eating, but to fling to the very hogs, having only tasted them. And this but to do what we liked, only because it was disliked. I lusted to thieve and did it compelled by no hunger nor poverty, but through a cloyedness of well-doing and a pamperedness of ini-

¹ J. Lee, *Play in Education*, Macmillan, New York, 1917, p. 228.

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quity. For I stole that of which I had enough and much better. Nor cared I to enjoy what I stole, but joyed in the theft and sin itself. For if aught of those pears came within my mouth, what sweetened it was the sin. It was the sport which as it were tickled our hearts". So it is obvious that the predatory impulse is not confined to those who are permanently rogues and vagabonds, for even the 'unco guid' may suffer from a 'cloyedness of well-doing'. Nor must we take the first superficial explanation of asocial conduct as the correct one. Crime is seldom resorted to from real want, while it is comparatively common amongst those brought up to expect and desire those things which are the perquisites of a station in life just above that to which they are born.

The most superficial study shows that many cases of theft have little or nothing to do with the predatory impulse. A girl, the child of a gay pleasure-loving woman, was brought up by an austere aunt, who never allowed her any personal adornment of any sort and kept her dressed

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as plainly as possible. The child went to a boarding school where she was discovered to have stolen small sums of money, which were spent on ribbons and cheap jewellery with which she decked herself in secret. A small boy was devoted to his father, but was kept in severe subjection by a step-mother, who had an overweening sense of duty but none of love. The boy was scrupulously honest outside the home as far as was known, but the step-mother missed small sums of money, and later it was found that the boy had taken these, but had not spent them. A girl at school had uncontrollable impulses to steal at certain times. She did this quite openly, taking things which were of no value to herself, and in a way which led to certain discovery. Various punishments and moral lectures were tried, but had not the slightest effect although she expressed contrition. It was found that these impulses occurred just before her monthly periods which were painful and difficult. A boy at school got into trouble because he stole spectacles, nothing but spectacles.

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It was found that he was labouring under the impression that the fact that he practised masturbation was clearly visible in his face to those who looked closely. Hence the deprivation of his neighbours of their spectacles. So with other delinquencies, the names truancy, assault, theft, etc., explain nothing, and if we are to diagnose crime correctly, we must turn our attention away from labels and towards the real causes and their remedies.

CHAPTER II

PUNISHMENT

As with crime so with punishment. If there is to be any clear thinking we must be quite sure what purpose punishment is supposed to achieve. As Lord Lytton says: "The one thing which never can be acquired by coercion is goodness or moral conduct. All punishment therefore which aims at correcting wickedness or teaching goodness is definitely mischievous. Goodness is a condition of mind as health is a condition of body. Moral defects of character are no more to be cured by punishment than defects of the body. It may be necessary in the interests of the health of a community, forcibly to segregate a person with an infectious disease; equally it may be necessary on the same ground to segregate persons whose moral defects

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are a danger to society, but it would be just as senseless and mischievous to try and cure a man of scarlet fever by shutting him up with a number of persons suffering from measles, tuberculosis or leprosy as it is to try and cure a man of stealing or cheating by shutting him up with other thieves and cheats."¹ Nor is this view particularly new—Jeremy Bentham expresses much the same idea: "To the eye thus prepared the most profligate offender will present on the one hand no fitter object of unprofitable resentment, on the other hand no less necessary object of preventive coercion than would be presented by a refractory patient or a froward child."²

Still, there are four possible purposes of punishment, though probably no form of punishment has ever been inflicted solely for one of these purposes. Our motives are apt to be mixed in this as in all other human activities. None the

¹ The Earl of Lytton, *Moral Hospitals*, "Howard Journal," II, 2, 1927, p. 89.

² J. Bentham's *Works*, Boaring edit., vol. iv, 1843, p. 174.

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less, for purposes of description we must discuss them separately.

Firstly, punishment may be inflicted for revenge, to work off our private spite against those who have or seem to have injured us. This certainly entered into the ferocious sentences which were not uncommonly passed upon poachers until quite recently, and, if our version of their law is correct, it was a frequent custom in primitive societies. Yet as Mr Kennett¹ has shown, the idea of restitution more often underlay these apparently cruel punishments than we are inclined to credit. Similarly, as has been pointed out in the recent report of the committee on juvenile crime, it does not always follow that a severe sentence for a trivial offence is necessarily wrong. It does not need much insight to see that a magistrate who has carefully and sympathetically studied a case in all its bearings may be perfectly right in sending a boy to a reformatory school for

¹ A. Kennett, *Laws and Customs amongst the Egyptian Bedouins*, Cambridge University Press, 1925.

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five years for stealing five shillings. None the less really retributive punishment must be destructive and can have no place in the treatment of children, for all our ideas in dealing with the young must be constructive if they are to lead us anywhere at all. Our object all sublime may be to make the punishment fit the crime, but, if those who chatter and bleat and bore are doomed to hear sermons from mystical Germans who preach from ten to four, it is really up to the assistant tormentor to see that the sermons contain at least some degree of true uplift.

Secondly, the object of punishment may be restitution. This was a definite feature of the ancient Arab and Israelitish justice as described by Mr Kennett.¹ The tradition of this has come down to us in the formula, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth', but except in the case of the Graiae, the old ladies whom Perseus outwitted so cruelly by stealing their

¹ A. Kennett, *Laws and Customs amongst the Egyptian Bedouins*, Cambridge University Press, 1925.

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single common eye and common tooth which were handed round amongst them, to seize our neighbour's eye or tooth because he has snatched out ours does not greatly benefit us. On the other hand, when we learn of the practice of certain tribes which enjoins that when a man has been killed, a woman shall be surrendered from the offending tribe, so that a new man may be raised up to replace the victim, we begin to see the force of this idea of punishment. As a matter of fact many authorities agree that this aspect is neglected in our modern penal system. After all if someone steals £5,000 from me, it may be very gratifying that the police should discover and apprehend the thief and that he should be detained for a period of seven years in durance vile, but if I don't get back my £5,000, I am not really very much better off. It has been justly maintained that the idea of restitution ought to be impressed more on the young delinquent, and there seems no reason why this should not be done. Children of all classes are keenly alive to a sense of

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justice, and, as we shall see, one of the causes of delinquency which we shall have to study is resentment at not obtaining a fair do. To take the example of petty larceny which forms such a large proportion of juvenile crime, there seems no reason why we should not to some extent dispute the pessimism of that famous poem:

“A fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind,
I think the poet would have changed his mind,
If turning in a crowd he chanced to find
A fellow feeling in his coat behind”.

The fellow may be made to change his mind if it is pointed out to him that to take what isn't his'n is not cricket and moreover, that he has to pay it back, and it is not impossible that we may after all become wondrous kind to the fellow and he to us if we can drive that lesson home. The amounts stolen by children to begin with are not large, and if the child is dealt with on his first offence, as we hope will be the case in the future, not necessarily by the police, but by the school authorities and the clinics, the sixpences and shillings which are the first things taken could easily be

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recovered from the child's pocket money, or, if there is none such, it would not be impossible even at an early age to put him in the way of earning small sums which would have to go first of all towards repaying what he had taken.

The third object of punishment is to act as a deterrent. As the old judges remarked to the prisoner convicted of sheep stealing : " We do not hang you because you stole sheep, but in order that sheep shall not be stolen ". This idea of deterrence is apt to be the refuge of those who do not wish to confess to a desire for retributive revenge. Deterrent penalties may be exemplified by corporal punishment, and there are grounds to suppose that this may be in certain cases psychologically justified, because a new inhibition of asocial behaviour is introduced. Such punishment therefore requires consideration, but the advocates of it must be quite certain that their motives are not mixed, and that they have purged from their souls all such notions as that the little beast should be birched because he jolly well deserves

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it. While on the subject of corporal punishment it may be pointed out that there is much loose thinking with regard to it. The cat may be and probably is a useful deterrent to the adult coward and bully, but as a general rule the boy who is ordered to be birched is neither a coward nor a bully. It must be remembered that our old friend, Solomon, about the absolute infallibility of whose wisdom we are not quite so sure as we used to be, was addressing parents when he advocated the rod—not schoolmasters and still less policemen. A tyrannical father or schoolmaster will do harm with the stick ; of that there is no doubt whatever. One who is really loved and respected may do good by the very judicious and occasional use of corporal punishment, but to suppose that a sergeant of police can produce any good effect is rubbish, while to suppose that a boy who has the enterprise to get into the sort of mischief for which birching is frequently ordered, is going to be deterred because he may be so punished is arrant nonsense. In Scotland, it was found

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that of the boys ordered to be birched, 38.67% reappeared in court within six months and 76.65% within two years.¹

None the less our behaviour is still to a considerable extent under the influence of hedonism and the expectation of discomfort may be a counter stimulus deterring us from a given course of action. This is of paramount importance in dealing with the professional criminal. By all means improve methods of detection, make it so that crime is more and more certain to be discovered, and when discovered that recurrence is going to be prevented by some means or another. Let us bring all those who adopt crime as a career to the opinion of the literary Jack Black that 'you can't win'.² Furthermore, deterrent punishment might be used with great advantage in certain offences. Picture the arrogant road-hog and motoring speed maniac confined in a row of stocks along the approach to

¹ *Report of an Enquiry into Juvenile Delinquency*, H. M. Stationery Office, Edinburgh, 1923, p. 11.

² Jack Black, *You Can't Win*, Macmillan & Co.

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Maidenhead Bridge or hung in pillories lining the Great North Road up Barnet Hill, with a posse of boy scouts tickling their noses with peacock feathers.

This, however, has nothing to do with the child ; we want something better than hedonism for him, our treatment must be constructive ; don't don't him, teach him how to do. And this brings us to the last means of dealing with crime—reconstruction and reformation, the only hopeful way of dealing with the child, except that, as mentioned above, the idea of paying back may be inculcated with this. We shall have to study means of reconstruction further on, but apart from this we must not lose sight of an important point. We have been considering the responsibility of the child and what is to be done to him, and indeed this is the attitude of English law, which, as has been pointed out, does consider every child over seven years old as personally responsible. Yet with every series of cases which come up for examination, there is always a considerable proportion in which the whole

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responsibility may be laid on the parents. At present parents may be fined or may be required to enter into recognizances for the good behaviour of the children. If they can be proved to have actually ill-treated or seriously neglected them, they can be dealt with under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, but these possibilities do not cover the requirements of the case and are not used even as much as they might be. It may be necessary in the interests of the children to remove from the parents the responsibility of educating and even feeding their dependents, for children must be taught and they must be properly nourished, but, if these positive responsibilities are taken from the parents, others ought to be more strictly enforced. If it can be proved that the parents have influenced their children in the direction of crime they should be most severely dealt with. Is it surprising that a family of children grew up to be thieves when their mother openly boasted to her neighbours that Woolworth's store was a great acquisition to the town as she only had to walk

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through and the children brought home all the soap and candles which she wanted? Yet in how many courts to-day would that mother be punished? We must find where the cause of crime lies and when we find it remove it. If that cause be the parent, then the parent must be removed or at least the child rescued from the parent. This of course brings us up against the difficulty as to where the child is to be removed to, and who is going to be responsible for the removal. At present, in this country, although many magistrates give very wise advice as to the disposal of neglected and ill-treated children, it seems doubtful if this ought to be the function of the police and the magistrate in his official capacity, for this presumes that at least a certain amount of harm has already been done, since the magistrate never has very early cognizance of such cases. Many European countries have a special government department dealing with the guardianship of children quite apart from any local authority. This takes on the responsibility where necessary

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for looking after children who are not otherwise properly provided for, and so far as can be seen these departments work well. There is, however, a danger of their becoming too bureaucratic and soulless, and it might be better that in each centre some advisory body with certain executive powers should be set up to deal with these problems. On such a body, educational, judiciary and medical advisers would sit and the magistrate of the children's court would be an important and indeed an essential member by reason of his interest and experience. But he would not act in his official capacity and so there would be no police-court flavour in the business.

Before leaving the subject of punishment there is one pernicious person who should be noticed, namely the receiver of stolen goods. He is already outside the law, but though we may confidently assert that Mr Fang, who sentenced Oliver Twist to three months' hard labour for not stealing a handkerchief, is as extinct as the dodo, Mr Fagin is still with us. Just as we may look forward

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to the time when crime as a career can no longer be intelligently embraced as a profitable outlet for the energies of youth, owing to the improvement in detective measures, we may hope that another factor in this desirable state of affairs will be the complete suppression of the opportunity of disposing of the proceeds of crime. The receiver always gives poor value, but the adult thief has some power of holding his own, and Macheath may now and then get the better of his amiable father-in-law, but the child will always be cheated, and since the exchange is so profitable Fagin is certain to ask Oliver for more. Indeed, there seems no good reason why a receiver convicted of dealing with a minor should not be dealt with so severely that he will be finally discouraged. In this respect deterrent punishment would seem to have a place, for, after all, the whole business is a commercial concern, and if a commercial enterprise does not pay it will not be undertaken. Thus, in dealing with the young, our object must be rescue and reform, but there must be no compromise with those who seek to drag him down.

CHAPTER III

THE DELINQUENT PERSONALITY

Have we any right to talk about a delinquent personality at all? If by this we mean that we can produce a formula whereby we may recognize the delinquent on sight amongst a crowd of other urchins, then certainly not, but if we mean that most delinquents differ somehow or other from the normal member of society, then I think the answer is in the affirmative. Lombroso¹ and the Italian School made a gallant attempt to establish an anthropology of the criminal, affirming that the shape of the skull, the structure of the brain and many other factors were distinctive of the inmates of their prisons. However, although it is not difficult to find the low forehead, the snub nose and the prognathous jaw of Bill Sykes, the

¹ C. Lombroso, *The Female Offender*.

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Shoreditch tough, and say: "There goes the typical criminal", we are apt to find Mr Sykes-William the bulwark of the Plymouth Brethren, who has led a blameless life from youth to age with an exactly similar cast of countenance. Furthermore, if the sentimental artist desires a fitting model for the angel child, let him go to the juvenile court. To Goring must be given the credit of disproving the Italian contentions by a painstaking empirical study of the English convict.¹ He concludes that the only common factor observable is a mental backwardness, and, except for those convicted of crimes of violence, physical underdevelopment. In Goring's day actual tests for mental backwardness were not developed as they are now, and so this was a term which had only a vague meaning and could not be regarded as in any way exact. To say that all delinquents are intellectually behind their neighbours is simply untrue. Opinions vary as to the extent to which real mental deficiency occurs among

¹ C. Goring, *The English Convict* (Abridged edit.), London, 1919.

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delinquents, but the most reliable estimate seems to be that of Professor Burt,¹ who only finds 8 per cent. amongst his cases who could be certified under the Mental Deficiency Act. On the other hand all those with any experience know that some delinquents are precocious and many more quite up to if not superior to the standard of intelligence of the normal, though it may be admitted that the slightly retarded group of children seems to contribute most largely to the ranks of delinquency. However, intelligence is not all. It is only now that the importance of emotional adjustments and their control is being realized, and we must look to the future to determine what exactly constitutes normal adjustment, how we can test the degree of mental inadequacy in this respect, and how we can best increase the efficiency of those who fail to reach the required standard.

The present writer has tried to formulate a conception of personality which includes the relationship of the individual

¹ C. Burt, *The Young Delinquent*, University of London Press, 1928, p. 300.

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to his environment, and in the discussion of the instable personality has suggested that the neurotic is characterized by conflict within the ego between the various impulses which go to make up the individual himself, while the delinquent is characterized by conflict between the ego and the environment.¹ The delinquent may be neurotic, he, or perhaps more often she, frequently is, but this is not necessary. After all man is a social animal and ideally he ought to be adjusted to the environment without friction. None of us can claim to such a state of bliss, we all go through our *Sturm und Dräng*, but it is specially characteristic of the delinquent that he is badly adjusted to the environment. It is suggested that this conflict in the personality is the underlying factor which we must always take into account. This inability to adjust as a social being to his milieu explains why one child brought up in a one-roomed tenement turns to crime, while half a dozen others do not —why one indulged with everything that

¹ R. G. Gordon, *Personality*, Kegan Paul, 1925, chap. xiv.

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money can buy turns thief, while the brother or sister keeps within the law and dies full of years and honour.

Unless we postulate some such underlying factor all our studies of the secondary influences such as health, housing, opportunities and provocation may well seem meaningless, since, for every young offender who is subjected to any of these, we may produce a dozen law-abiding children influenced by exactly the same condition. However, if we recognize this peculiarity in the personality of the delinquent, we can with profit proceed to study the factors which seem to favour the development of asocial behaviour. It is these latter factors which can be influenced and possibly removed by our social endeavours in the comparatively near future. The underlying instability needs a great deal more study, and even when properly understood it will only be by the slow process of eugenic education that we can hope to eliminate it.

CHAPTER IV

THE SOCIAL FACTOR

We have now discussed crime, punishment and the personality of the delinquent. We realize that in the future there may be considerable changes in what is regarded as crime, and that attention is being diverted from the crime to the nature of the reactions of the criminal. We already see that punishment at any rate so far as children are concerned is no longer vindictive or even deterrent, except that we make it quite clear to the child that he cannot transgress and get away with it. Our efforts must be re-educative, and we have to recognize that the offender has a peculiar personality in respect of his power to adjust to the environment. We must now consider the various factors, which in such a deficient personality give rise to asocial reactions, and determine how by an

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understanding of these we may either prevent the occurrence of such reactions, or, if they have already occurred, how we may prevent their recurrence, or, further, if they must recur, how we may protect the individual and society from their effects.

Before considering the child himself we may turn our attention to his setting—the social factor. For the child this is the home, the school, and the street. Perhaps the home is the most important influence with regard to delinquency, for it is only when the home is bad that the street assumes importance. Some people seem to think that slums, sloth and slovenliness—bad housing, unemployment and uncleanliness have important relation to crime. Whatever may be the case in the adult, this is not noticeably so in children. It would be futile to suppose that these factors have no influence, for it is obvious that children growing up in a one-roomed tenement with one common cold tap on the landing will not imbibe that modesty and decency of feeling which some of our moralists are apt to regard as the highest virtue. None the less, it is doubtful

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whether even sex delinquency is so very much more common amongst children who have been used to being herded with adults and adolescents as these same people seem to believe.

Again, when children have no playing ground but the street, it is not surprising that slum children are often brought up to the courts on the charge of playing football, breaking windows and so on. Incidentally, with regard to playing football in the streets, surely this could be dealt with outside the police court, for after all children must play, and the crime is rather that of the community for not providing proper places for this purpose. One factor, however, in this question of the street as the playing field is of importance, namely, the tendency for the formation of gangs of boys, who roam the neighbourhood in search of amusement or of some fresh sensation. Often these gangs may be harmless enough, if properly directed, and there is a great deal of truth in Mr Buchan's picture of the Gorbals Diehards,¹ who pinched everything

¹ J. Buchan, *Huntingtower*, Nelson, 1922.

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they could lay hands on in Glasgow, but in spite of Wee Jaikie's slogan :

“ Class-conscious we are and class-conscious we'll be,
Till our foot's on the neck of the Boorjoyzie ”

in the country were “ the grandest lot of wee laddies I ever heard tell of ”. Too often, however, the gangs come under the dominance of older boys already practised in misdemeanours, and these may lead their dupes into crimes ranging from petty larceny and malicious mischief to breaking and entering, and even assault and battery. Too often also the smaller and more feeble-minded children are given the ‘ sticky jobs ’ and left to reap the consequences, while their more astute comrades, like the Artful Dodger, take as their motto : “ Those who fight and run away survive to fight another day ”. All these difficulties are surely capable of remedy now that the social conscience of the community is fully aroused to the evils of slum dwellings and the need for adequate open spaces, where the people may not only enjoy the formal flower garden,

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but where the children can really play and work off their superfluous energy.

There remains, however, a more important and much more difficult problem which it may take the wisdom of many generations to solve, namely, the smooth adjustment of family life. This is not a problem of any one social class, and is certainly not confined to the poor whose advantages are few ; indeed the wonder is, if we take material considerations into account, not how many children of the very poor get into trouble, but how few. The class which enjoys more leisure and luxury must pay a tribute to the working-class mother—cook, housekeeper, laundry-hand, and perhaps industrial worker too, and yet able to rear her children so successfully. Perhaps she may copy the cat who, when the bare needs of nourishment are served, and the first lessons in self-preservation instilled, turns her kittens out of doors to fend for themselves ; be that as it may, the results on the whole are amazingly good. The fact remains however, that the broken home is a factor which most constantly forces itself

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upon the notice of the student of the young offender. A child should be reared as part of an equilateral triangle. Mother and father should both exert their influence from a different but an equal angle, neither ousting the other in affection or regard, and remembering that the child is also an equal, neither to be repressed into submission or adulated into ascendancy. Even where both parents are alive and in at any rate outward harmony, how seldom is this ideal relationship with the child maintained! Freud would say Never. Yet although it may be theoretically possible to find an *Œdipus* complex in everyone, quite a large number of people adjust to their parents and develop reasonably well. But when one parent is dead or divorced, or where the home is a constant battle ground of overt strife or an irritating sore of nagging spite, what chance has the child to grow up normally robust and straight? Over and over again we find that delinquency begins from spite against the stepmother or stepfather, or because the child is receiving justice rather than love, and too often not even justice. We

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find that the boy lacks the firm control of a man in the house, while the girl is always being nagged or scolded or given too much responsibility. A child brought up in such surroundings is not getting his due. Sentimentalists talk about the sanctity of the home, too often there is no sanctity, only hell. The average Englishman is loth to agree to any measure which removes a child from the care of its parents except under great provocation, yet many continental states assume guardianship over their children much more readily than we do, and on the whole the results seem good. But, if it can be proved with all due safeguards that the parents are not providing a proper home and upbringing for their children, and it is desirable to remove these children, it does not follow that these parents should be freed from all responsibility. There should be no premium on parental neglect, and it should cost the bad parents more either in money or trouble to have the child provided for by the State than it would do if they looked after it really well at home.

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This brings us to the vexed problem of the illegitimate child. At present the position is not satisfactory ; many such children come under the Poor Law Guardians, who board them out with foster parents. There is a good deal to be said for the system adopted in Switzerland, where the State takes charge of all the illegitimate children, and makes itself responsible for discovering the father, sueing him for alimony if possible, and providing for the child. On the other hand the State reserves the right to refuse to allow the mother to look after her own child if she is not a fit and proper person to do so. In all schemes the system of placing children with foster parents is apt to be haphazard, and in examining any series of delinquent children one comes across several illegitimates who are obviously badly placed. As an example, we may take a small boy who was the illegitimate son of the eldest daughter of a large family. He was taken in by his grandmother, who assured the visitor that the child did not know he was illegitimate, and that he was treated as the youngest

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of the family, in every way as well as the rest. On questioning the child however, as to why he was so often late for school, we were informed that he had to carry coal and clean up the house. Closer enquiry showed that he was the household drudge, that other children in the neighbourhood told him he had no right in his mother's house, and he volunteered that the others in his home were his nephews ; really of course he was their nephew. It is evident that he may not have known clearly that he was illegitimate, but he knew that something was wrong, and felt acutely that he was not getting fair play. This is typical of case after case, and there can be no question that illegitimacy has a marked influence either direct or indirect on the origin of delinquency.

It is not to be supposed that in the future illegitimacy will cease to exist, but society must see to it that the child gets a proper chance and is not subjected to indignities which he does not deserve. This can probably be brought about by more careful placing with regard to the

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requirements of the child and what the foster parents can offer. The unfortunate thing is that as a rule the better and more desirable people are less willing to take these unfortunates, but the labours of such organizations as the National Adoption Society are already doing a great work in this direction and in the future will doubtless do more still.

CHAPTER V

THE EDUCATIONAL FACTOR

Next to the home the school is the most important influence in the child's life, and several problems present themselves. We must realize that the teacher is as a rule the first person who is in a position to take a dispassionate view of the child and, therefore, estimate his adaptabilities and potentialities. The parent cannot be expected to recognize that his child is backward or delinquent unless these characteristics are so obvious that he who runs may read. A great responsibility is thus put upon the teacher, and in many cases this is responded to nobly. It is not always so, however, and it is not uncommon to find that, for example, a backward child is allowed to sit at the bottom of the class as long as he gives no trouble. Here he may remain, bored,

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neglected, and perhaps nursing a grievance; till at last he surprises everyone by breaking out somehow or other in an effort to assert himself or to get even with the world. A distinguished educational psychologist once told a story of his teaching days. In the school there was a particularly naughty boy and the staff meetings at the beginning of each term were taken up almost entirely, not in planning the curriculum, but in discussing who should be afflicted with Smith minor.

If we are to advance towards our ideal of preventing crime and eradicating the criminal from society, we must discover the very germ of the affliction. By the time a child reaches the courts it is too late. He is not a first offender though it may be the first time he has broken the eleventh commandment. So it is to the teachers that we must look to discover the first signs of difficulty in a child, and they must be helped with practical advice if they cannot solve the problem unaided. In this way the backward child may be discovered and properly placed, for in the future we shall

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surely have more carefully graded schools. A distinct step in advance has been achieved in the establishment of special schools for mental deficient, but those who are sent there are really very backward indeed. There are many others who are subject to unfair competition when placed in classes with normal children of their age, and it is probably not impossible now that transport facilities are improving so rapidly for schools to be classified, less in accordance with the districts which they serve and more in accordance with the intellectual standards of their pupils. Naturally, the school medical officer can assist enormously in co-operation with the teachers, and either by himself or in conjunction with the necessary specialists establish a service for the adequate supervision of the problem child, thereby eliminating the epileptic, the sufferer from encephalitis lethargica and certain other conditions to be dealt with later. However, it is not only the backward and the sick child who require attention. Amongst delinquents we shall always

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find some children who are precocious. Here we are dealing with the old adage that 'Satan finds some mischief still'. If the child's energies and abilities are not exercised by legitimate pursuits the chances are that they will be used in furthering illegitimate occupations. Such precocity may be either manipulative or intellectual. The development of hand craft and practical work in laboratories and workshops is doing much for the child who is dexterous with his hands, while our national passion for games serves many of these children well, still examples such as the following are found. An eight-year-old youngster of a most engaging personality had already earned the distinction of being the most expert pickpocket of the district ; he was the son of an alcoholic who had broken up the home and driven the boy to find his only resting-place in the streets, where his nimble fingers had soon won for him position and perhaps comparative wealth. But the father had not always been an alcoholic. Once he had been a law clerk and known throughout the profession as

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the best calligraphist of his day. He had handed on to his son his manual agility together with an inherent difficulty in adjusting himself to his surroundings, which resulted in the one taking whisky and the other watches. The intellectually precocious child, finding his lessons easy and dull, is apt to weave phantasies. These phantasies may become so real that the child chases them and wanders away in search of his particular El Dorado, so that he may stray far from home and become an incorrigible truant like one little boy who was apprehended as such by the police. He informed the kindly sergeant who questioned him that he had gone off to look for the fairies, and seemed to regard the majesty of the law as a passable imitation of Oberon. In other cases the phantasy may take on a more active form and lead to all sorts of misdeeds, many of which seem to the observer, unacquainted with the phantasy which they serve, to be utterly without motive and totally bereft of rhyme or reason. A remedy for such conditions might be found in the grading

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of schools according to intellectual capacity, which has been mentioned above.

To the teachers of the future then we must look for a just appreciation of the problem presented to them and a prompt response to the challenge of the difficult child. They must feel that it is a reproach to them that any child who has been through their hands should come into the clutches of the law at all, or if this is inevitable they can at least make sure that before this happens the child has been given the chance of being thoroughly examined and sympathetically dealt with.

CHAPTER VI

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTOR

We must next turn our attention to the child himself. We find that some factors have to do with the mind and some with the body, but this distinction is probably more apparent than real. The psychological factors may be divided into two, firstly, the mental reactions to retardation of development whether in body or mind, secondly, want of proportion between the emotional constituents of the personality. The great contribution of Alfred Adler to modern psychology consists in his working out the psychological reactions to bodily and mental inferiority. The effect of bodily conditions on mental reactions, like all things scientific was well known to the poets and especially to Shakespeare; remember Caliban:

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' which any print of goodness will not take
Being capable of all ill ",

and Richard the humpback,

" Good Gloster and good devil were alike
And both preposterous,"

" An indigest deformed lump,"

who says :

" born with teeth !
And so I was, which plainly signified
That I should snarl, and bite, and play the
dog
Then, since the Heavens have shap'd my body
so,
Let Hell make crook'd my mind to answer it
I have no brother, I am like no brother ;
And this word love, which greybeards call
divine,
Be resident in men like one another,
And not in me, I am myself alone "

Adler points out that when a person possesses a physical deformity which puts him at a disadvantage compared to others, he is apt to develop a compensatory will to power which impels him to strive to a goal of assertion of self and achievement of his purpose at all costs. The classical example of this is of course Demosthenes the stammerer,

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who became the first orator of Greece. Although in general the cripple is a sunny well-disposed child, sometimes we meet with the thrown urchin who easily drifts into delinquency of one sort or another. If we can get insight into the minds of such children, we find that they do feel a grudge against fate, and that much of their petty thieving is an attempt to get even and prove themselves adequate at something in their own eyes. Much is being done at the present time for the crippled child, and the orthopædic schemes which are being started all over the country are making crooked limbs straight and removing not only the hump like that of Richard of Gloster, but also the hump that is black and blue about which Kipling tells us. But the future promises us the prevention of crippling of body and we may hope of mind too. Rickets is a disease which should never occur if every child came into what is his rightful heritage, sunlight unobscured by smoke, fresh air untainted by percolation through crowded slum dwellings, and fresh food not deprived of its vitamins by com-

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mercialized concentrations. Again, if the child could obtain clean milk guaranteed free from germs, and if the community would insist on the prosecution of any one who supplied tubercular milk on a charge of aggravated assault upon the race, there would be no more tuberculosis of bones and joints. A discovery of a means of recognition and treatment of infantile paralysis before the paralysis develops should not be beyond the scope of the preventive medicine of the future, and these measures together with a better understanding of birth palsies would prevent almost all crippling, and the orthopædic surgeon would have to turn his skill to other uses.

It is probable that if we achieve this improvement in the physical health of the young by attention to these fundamental rules of hygiene we shall also benefit the mental condition and influence both the stability of the personality and the important psychological factor of mental defect. Really defective children are already recognized fairly efficiently by the school medical service which

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regularly inspects all children up to the age of fourteen or even sixteen. These are placed in special schools or institutions so that they have little and will have less opportunity of injuring the community. With the slightly backward child, however, who does not come within the meaning of the act as was pointed out in the last chapter, we have a problem of serious dimensions, for again the compensatory will to power is in evidence. A backward child who was not only slow in her mind but clumsy with her fingers found that she could not excel at anything. Yet there was in her blood a persistency, inherited from an ancestor who had at one time made considerable way in the world. She found her opportunity when she acquired certain undesirable knowledge and gathered round her an admiring circle to whom she handed on the information. The school authorities took exception to this and she was transferred elsewhere. Naturally the same thing occurred again, and not until she was taken in hand as an individual case by a sympathetic governess who dis-

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covered what she could do both mentally and physically and did not try to press her beyond this, was any progress made. Eventually she grew up to be no worse than many who pass in this world for average examples of *homo sapiens*. Others achieve in phantasy the greatness which is denied them in reality, and although this does not often lead to active delinquency it may do so. A school boy who dreamed of fame and the adulation of his fellows had occasion to obtain his house master's signature for a pair of slippers. Suddenly the impulse came to him to rub out slippers and substitute a whole first eleven kit. This he could never wear of course, and the only practical effect was to deplete his father's banking account somewhat unnecessarily.

The other psychological type which requires study is the child who is seriously unbalanced in his emotional dispositions, or who has them so poorly under control that they cause him to break out into wild outbursts of reckless behaviour. We all know the abnormally timid child, the child with an ungovernable temper and

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the child whose sex-impulses are quite out of control, nor are cases like the following uncommon. A boy of six was reported to be quite incorrigible. At times he was violent, doing bodily harm to other children, he was spiteful and very destructive. It was said that he could be angelic if he thought he could gain by it, but that he had no real affection whatever. He was generally mentally backward, but seemed to have no power of exercising any emotional control and was decidedly deficient in prospective imagination. Such a child, who resembles the epileptic in many respects, is supposed to be provided for by the use of the term 'moral imbecile', which enables him to be certified under the Mental Deficiency Act. It is always difficult to decide what degree of naughtiness can constitute moral imbecility. Consequently many think that in addition to being scientifically inexact the term 'moral imbecile' has no pragmatic value. Attempts have been made to reach an exact definition, but so far they have not been very successful and are apt to be resisted by those who think that

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the liberty of the subject may be too much encroached upon. No doubt in the future some sort of compromise may be reached whereby really incorrigible children may be restrained and permanently put under proper supervision, for it generally means a life-long defect, and temporary confinement in an industrial or reformatory school does not meet the case and still less does imprisonment for relatively short periods. It is difficult to say whether such children, if recognized sufficiently early, could be saved by proper education or more suitable environment. No doubt the milder cases could be so dealt with, but there undoubtedly remains a small but definite group for whom our knowledge, at any rate as it stands at present, is powerless to do anything, and it is necessary to deal with them so as to protect these children themselves and society in general from their tantrums and excesses. Wise Psychotherapy may do much for such children and Psychoanalysis claims a great deal, but it is much too early to be sure of the good or ill effects of this complex procedure.

CHAPTER VII

THE MEDICAL FACTOR

Apart from the purely psychological aspect of the problem of delinquency there is a medical side which is of some importance. That is to say certain cases show asocial behaviour which is directly or indirectly traceable to states of bodily or mental health which come within the purview of the physician in his every-day practice. Consequently, in the team which deals with the problem of children's crime the doctor must have a place, but he must be a man of wide experience and above all free from preconceptions and prejudices.

If a child is to succeed in the world he must not be afflicted with defects which make it impossible for him to compete fairly with his fellows. We have already drawn attention to the

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cripple and his will to power, and similar reactions may be met with in those with other defects. Apart from this, however, actual disabilities may make it impossible for a child to adapt himself to life in the normal way. We may illustrate this from cases whose special senses are defective. A small boy was in trouble at school for truancy. When he did go to school the master complained that his mind wandered, and that he was rude when corrected—not criminal at the moment, but heading that way. He had a disease of the eyes which made it impossible for him to see the black-board unless close up to it. How could he attend to or enjoy school work under such circumstances? Similarly with deaf children, not always recognized, inattention and truancy may be the first steps on the road to more serious mischief, while the psychological effect of these disabilities must never be forgotten. Less common conditions must also be kept in mind. For example, at an institution where young people committed by the courts are trained to take their places

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in the industrial community, was a well enough disposed young man whose crime had been truancy from school and being out of control. In the workshops he did reasonably well, but the school-master, a conscientious and painstaking man, wrung his hands over this boy and reported that he could not or would not learn to read. He would with great labour master simple words like c. a. t. and d. o. g., but next morning when shown these same words have not the faintest idea of their meaning. Enquiry showed that when he was charged before the magistrates it had been suggested that he was not quite normal, and all the reply vouchsafed was that they could not concern themselves with such things and that the institution could find out anything that might be wrong. In this case it should have been discovered at least ten years previously that the child was suffering from an uncommon disability called congenital word blindness, which means that he had an inherent inability to understand written speech, owing to the fact that the necessary part

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of the brain was not developed. Such children if taken early can be trained by other methods and it is highly probable that this boy's police record was directly attributable to his unfortunate mal-development. We may deplore that this was not discovered at an early age, but we must all agree that the attitude of the magistrates was nothing short of a scandal.

Certain diseases affecting the brain are notoriously associated with delinquency. Of these by far the most interesting is encephalitis lethargica—sleepy sickness. In many of these cases there appears as a sequel to the acute attack a moral deterioration which leads too commonly to delinquency. In a pilgrimage through Central Europe on an enquiry as to methods of dealing with delinquents, one of the first questions asked was, What do you do with your encephalitics? Almost invariably the reply came, with a hopeless shrug of the shoulders—Nothing, what do you? It is an amazingly difficult problem. These children are more often naughty rather

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than wicked. They are incapable of controlling their tempers, they want to shine and to draw attention to themselves. A red-headed urchin, a regular Micky Dolan, was in an industrial school. He had a genius for escaping, and he wandered off through the town and finally knocked at a likely looking door. With a pathetic expression and duly punctuating his remarks with heart-rending sobs, he related how he had been going home one afternoon in a town fifty miles away and had stopped to admire a motor-car. A gentleman had come out and asked him if he wouldn't like a drive. He said he would and had been brought here and now was left stranded, hungry and forlorn, what was he to do? Of course he was brought in and given a good tea, after which the worthy woman, indignant at the wrong done to the poor child, would go to the nearest telephone and ring up the inspector of police. She then prepared to give a voluble account of the whole proceedings, but to her chagrin, before she had delivered herself of more than

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a few sentences, a tired voice would say: "Oh yes, that's Tommy Smith, we'll come for him."

A girl, from being a studious, quiet, well-behaved child, suddenly developed a most uncontrollable temper. When crossed in anything she seized whatever was handy, cups, food, plates or knives and threw them at her parents, brothers, or any neighbours who happened to be present. She broke the windows, gave her father, an ex-sergeant-major, a black eye, and generally became a terror to her family and to the whole street.

A boy in school could not control his temper and gave vent to what is sometimes called self-expression by fastening his teeth firmly in any exposed part of such as displeased him.

A girl if allowed to go out in the street might at any moment feel impelled to divest herself of her clothing, and this she did most completely and expeditiously.

These children are hardly criminal, yet they come into contact with the guardians of law and order. They are naughty some of the time but not

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necessarily all the time, and occasionally may be perfectly moral children for months on end. Nor is their recovery either certain or hopeless. Many seem to deteriorate, others to remain much as they were, while others get better for no particular reason. Of the four cases quoted, much the most serious problem seemed to be the girl who threw the household utensils at her family, but she is now perfectly well, doing good work in a school among young children ; the rest seem to be much the same. What is to be done with these children ? It is quite obvious that neither prison nor asylum is the place for them, they are a perfect nuisance in school, industrial or otherwise, and the opening of a special large institution by the Metropolitan Asylums Board to admit these children, seems to be little more than a sign of a recognition of the problem, for they cannot be dealt with in the bulk. Admittedly our ignorance of what to do for those afflicted with this scourge is very nearly complete. So far as these conduct disorders are concerned,

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individual care is the only thing which seems to hold out any hope of success. The workers in the institute for psychopathological children which is doing admirable work on a small scale in Berlin under the direction of Fraülein Ruth van den Leyen tell me that they have had some success by placing one encephalitic with a few other children in a well supervised cottage home, but what is one among so many? This problem is a really serious one, and will tax to the full the ingenuity and wisdom of future workers in the field of delinquency, if the disease continues in its present form, and if the medical profession cannot find a preventive measure, or at least a means of cure in its early stages.

The next important condition is epilepsy. For many years this has been recognized as having a close association with crime, as it occasionally happens in severe cases that a fit is followed by a curious mental state called automatism, during which the patient may perform quite unconsciously actions foreign to his ordinary habit, and these may well be

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criminal. Aggravated assaults and even murders have been reported which have been proved to have been committed in this state, but the defence of epileptic automatism is not uncommonly advanced without any obvious justification. So far as children are concerned however, this automatism is far less important than the general personality of the epileptic, which is only now coming to be recognized. The child is peculiarly egocentric and wanting in the ordinary affections. He will act to suit his own convenience, and appeals to his better feelings are entirely without effect. Punishment also has very little and at best only a temporary influence. The character tends to deteriorate and this is the main feature in the disease we call epilepsy. It must be remembered that fits are only a symptom which may or may not be present. The following case is illustrative, and although he did not have fits, the authorities concerned were eventually convinced of the correctness of the diagnosis of epilepsy, because another case was met with who showed an almost

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identical personality and behaviour and who did have fits. A boy aged six was complained of because he was spiteful and hurt other children when in a temper. This he did not attempt to control, and he screamed and danced with rage on the least provocation. He was very restless and exceedingly difficult to manage. He has learnt to play up to his mother to get what he wants, but has no real affection for her and resents the existence of his younger sister. He continually tries to get into the limelight and is totally oblivious to anything but his own interests. Punishment has no more than a momentary influence. The only treatment for such a case is to send him to an institution where he will be prevented from damaging others, since the outlook for cure is bad. Society has a right to be protected from such cases, and a proper provision for them would be to place them in carefully graded residential schools and work colonies for epileptics so organized that a certain choice of colony would be possible depending on the general level of the child's

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mentality. Further research is required to enable us to recognize this type of case more surely than we can do at present, and all concerned must realize that the personality and not the fit is the criterion of the epileptic.

Children suffering from chorea or St Vitus's dance frequently behave in the most foolish and bizarre fashion, and occasionally this behaviour brings them into the ranks of delinquency. If it were true, as depicted in a stained glass window in the Cathedral of Prague, of which city St Vitus is the patron, that the poor little boy had to stand with his feet in a cauldron of boiling oil, this might well excuse him not only for dancing and being jerky in his body but also for being jerky in his mind and committing really serious misdemeanours. Similarly congenital syphilis is occasionally responsible for asocial behaviour. For example, the second of a family of three congenital syphilitics expressed his departure from health by first of all trying to cook the family cat, and when that failed to please owing to the employ-

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ment of claws by the victim he did his best to grill his baby brother. All these conditions represent defects or injuries in the structure of the brain, and such injury is probably directly responsible for the delinquencies. However, our knowledge is not yet sufficiently exact to allow us to state what particular part or parts of the brain are involved in the lesion which results in this type of conduct.

Next we come to the neurotic children who would need a book to themselves. Here let it suffice to indicate that there are two main types, the repressed and the dissociated. The repressed children are full of fears and doubts, anxieties and terrors. They suffer from an intense feeling of inferiority and may lie in the most senseless way in a sort of wild effort to deceive themselves. Similarly, senseless stealing is met with in such cases, but this is hardly the place to trace out the complex psychological motives and countermotives of these much afflicted children. The dissociated type on the other hand is cheerful, unconcerned and

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almost flippant in his behaviour. He is difficult to impress, and is a great problem in the school because nothing at all has any effect on him, and he continues to like all his masters and fellows whatever they do to him. This apparent affection is quite unreal and often covers a total want of emotional feeling. These children are much given to phantasy formation, and will lie and steal in obedience to the imaginary situations which they weave for themselves. Since they believe in the phantasies quite as firmly as in what we call reality, they will talk and act in accordance with them and stick to their statements and find justification for their actions, which may be quite criminal in spite of all that can be said. Such a case was a boy who was caught red-handed stealing at school. In spite of this he denied that he was stealing, he was only looking for something that belonged to him. He was quite unconcerned over the whole affair, and could not understand why his house-master and parents made such a fuss about the matter. He had made up his

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own story to explain the affair, and this satisfied him, so nothing else mattered. It is easy to see how puzzling the behaviour of these neurotic children may be, and yet, if they are handled with understanding and placed in a suitable environment, they may grow up to be quite useful citizens. No general rules can be given for the management of these children, for each is a problem peculiar to itself and requires individual study.

Lastly we come to the children who are really insane. Overt insanity leading to asocial behaviour is by no means common before late adolescence, a period which hardly concerns us, but we must remember that both general paralysis and dementia praecox may occur in childhood and lead to trouble. Clearly such children require special control and their behaviour is so unusual as a rule as to call for examination by a psychiatrist, yet in both cases delinquency may be the first recorded symptom of their illness.

CHAPTER VIII

THE AIMS OF THE FUTURE

What may we look for in the future? It must be a change of attitude all round, firstly, in the home, secondly, in the school and thirdly in the courts, though the real ideal at which we should aim is to reduce the material with which the magistrate has to deal in the children's court to the vanishing point. At present if a child lies or steals, the parents are either amused, thinking the child rather clever, or are shocked and frightened and, talking about original sin, try to pretend that it hasn't happened, or say that the child will grow out of it. The last thing they seem to do is to regard this behaviour in the light of an abnormality in mental health and seek advice as to whether the condition is serious or not. Nowadays it is a matter of course in all

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classes, that if Baby has a cough or a pain he is at once taken to the hospital or clinic where medical aid is sought with the lively expectation of a prompt cure. Even if this is not always forthcoming it is sufficiently common to maintain the confidence of the public. In the future, "Erewhon" must come into its own, and it must be as much a matter of course to seek skilled advice when Johnnie steals or lies or beats his baby brother or has a breaking out of uncontrollable temper as it is now when he sneezes or coughs or when he has a breaking out of spots.

Similarly with the school, the teacher will realize to the full the responsibility which he holds in respect of the emotional development as well as of the intellectual development of the child. Further, he will realize that in moulding the child's character he cannot expect that the jelly will jell always in the same shape. He will realize that each child has his own impulses, ambitions and capabilities, and the principles of vocational guidance will be extended to an earlier age than is

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now thought possible. It is not meant from this that there is any advocacy of earlier specialization in the intellectual sense, it is more in the emotional sphere that we require adaptation to be made easier. These are great demands to make on the teacher, but the profession, entrusted as it is with the task which at once presents the most arduous labour and the most wonderful possibilities, will not be found wanting. Moreover, the clarification of the study of character will do much to abolish the monotony which is the chief complaint of the teaching profession. At present it sometimes seems that all the teacher has to look forward to is to go on interminably teaching children of the same age from the same text book, but if he has to mould each individual character his task will not be stereotyped whatever else it is. However, there will always be children with whose problems he is not able to cope, and for whom he requires skilled help from specialists. We see, therefore, that both for the parent and the teacher such help must be provided, and it must

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be as easy of access as is the hospital or health clinic. There must be no stigma attached to seeking this advice and the specialists must be eminently sane and well balanced. In many cases, more than might at first be expected, if the child is brought early, advice will be all that is required, but now and then it will be found that action must be taken. Then the authorities concerned must be prepared to co-operate with a minimum of friction and delay. The state must see to it also that at least the broad types of cases can be dealt with in a suitable way. Thus, proper institutions and schools will have to be provided for defectives, epileptics and encephalitics and perhaps for neurotics. If some cavil at the expense, it must be remembered that these should take the place of prisons.

If the home is utterly impossible, machinery must be easily put in motion to provide the child with a better one. Special institutions on the lines of industrial schools may be required. At present it is only from the police courts that cases can be admitted to such schools,

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unless someone is prepared to find some thirty shillings a week to cover maintenance. The Guardians will sometimes do this, but too often an orphan with no male relative to advise and restrain him, and spoiling for want of a little kindly discipline, cannot be provided for unless he does something for which he can be brought before the magistrate. An institution such as that at Eggenburg near Vienna seems very useful. This is practically an industrial school but free. That is to say children are not forced to stay there and can be sent by any authority or simply at the request of the parents. To be successful, such a school, which of course would be residential, should be in the country, so that escape or rather voluntary abstention is difficult, for although such a school might well be under the educational authority and so have the same status as any other school, the children who would be admitted have a difficulty in adjusting to their environment, or they would not be there. At first such children would probably try to get away and if in a town this might

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be too easy ; on the other hand, in the country they would soon settle down and be perfectly happy. Such residential schools should not be beyond the means of our improved social services, especially if it meant that crime was really diminished. They need not be too institutional or too large and could be adapted to various classes of problem children. In addition to this there should be further grading of schools so that children of varying mental calibre could be placed in their proper groups.

With these possibilities provided for, the clinics which will have to be set up in all large centres must be staffed with the greatest care. The recently established Child Guidance Council is making itself responsible for starting such a clinic in London, and the experiment will be watched with the greatest interest. Such clinics are already in being in America and are on the whole working well. In this country we shall have to work out our own problems, for we cannot import methods ready made from America or any other country, where racial, economic

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and social conditions are entirely different. All of the officials of such clinics must be men and women of wide experience and outlook who have had dealings with normal children as well as abnormals, and who are really thoroughly trained for the work. There is always a risk that those trained for this sort of work have concerned themselves only with abnormal types and so have lost their sense of proportion. However the staffing of the clinics is arranged, those responsible will have to be prepared to contribute an authoritative opinion on questions which fall under four heads so that the whole picture of the particular child's personality may be available.

1. *Social* :
 - a. Effects of the state of the family (parents dead, divorced, living in harmony or the reverse).
 - b. Is the child under investigation the oldest, youngest or only child, and how is he adapted to such peculiar family relationships?
 - c. State of the home (number of rooms, chances for privacy, recreation, etc.).

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- d. Economic condition of the family (conditions of food, cleanliness and clothing).*
- 2. Psychological* :
 - a. Estimation of intellectual capacity (backwardness or precocity).*
 - b. Estimation of emotional stability and the excess or inadequacy of any of the chief emotional dispositions or "instincts" in McDougall's sense of the word.*
 - c. Estimation of the powers of integration (character formation) and discrimination (sense of proportion).*
- 3. Educational* :
 - a. Estimation of degree of adaptation within his school, whether this be an ordinary school, a special school (for defectives, epileptics, etc.), or a residential school.*
 - b. Recommendations for the grading of backward and precocious children and their placing in mixed or segregated (boys or girls) schools.*
 - c. Vocational guidance for the older children. (This problem is of a special difficulty in the case of girls and is further referred to below.)*

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4. *Medical* :
 - a.* Detection of defects in general health and organs of the special senses.
 - b.* Detection of orthopaedic defects.
 - c.* Detection of signs or symptoms of disease of the central nervous system.
 - d.* Detection of psychoneuroses.
 - e.* Detection of psychoses (true insanity).

No doubt most of the details on which the opinion of the expert social worker, psychologist, teacher and physician are based will be supplied by voluntary visitors, the child's own teachers, his family doctor and the school medical officer, and the expert should be responsible for checking the accuracy of the information supplied to him, but an expert opinion should be given in every case, and where necessary there should be access to legal advice, especially when cases are referred from the courts.

With regard to the children's courts much has already been done. The principle that these should be entirely separate from the adult court and as

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informal as possible is already accepted, and will doubtless soon be of universal application. Again it is admitted that a rota of magistrates who are deemed specially suitable should be appointed to preside over the children's courts, and doubtless future home secretaries will exercise particular care in the choice of these men and women. There will be a minimum of delay in dealing with children's cases and when a remand is necessary the child will never be detained in a police court or a prison, but in a special remand home which need not be institutional.

The whole object of the treatment meted out by the court will be, as is practically universally the case at present, the restoration of the child to the ranks of the decent citizen. This will be achieved largely by the probation system and the use of the reformatory school and Borstal system if the latter is still necessary. So far as boys are concerned, if all the industrial schools come up to the standard of our present best, there need not be much complaint, but all

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probation officers and superintendents of schools might well have more systematic training in the recognition of the problems involved and in the means of their solution. The probation officer is a most important official, perhaps the most important in our whole judicial system, and the very best type of man and woman should be attracted by the high estimation in which the office is held and the adequate remuneration attached to it. It is a whole-time job and a difficult job, requiring the greatest sympathy, patience and tact and the state should insist in obtaining only the best, while at the same time the job must be made worth while. The science of vocational guidance, if we may so designate it, will no doubt be much advanced on its present stage and both school officials and probation officers must be experts in this. The problem so far as boys are concerned is not so very difficult, though more use might be made of training ships for these children than is at present the case. These are mostly run by private concerns, and

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children from the courts are received as an act of grace in certain cases. The sea is an eminently suitable career for many of these boys and the envy expressed by those who are interested in the problem of delinquency in countries where there are no facilities for this special training is eloquent testimony of the use that might be made of it. The ban on the emigration to the dominions of boys from reformatory and Borstal institutions must surely be removed. If properly selected many of these boys would make ideal settlers and they cannot be compared for a moment to the old convicts who were sent to Australia and other places in the old days. It seems hard that these boys should be deprived of what is perhaps the one chance in the world of rehabilitating them in their own eyes and in the eyes of society.

The problem of the girl, however, is one of real difficulty not only here but in every country. The numbers to be dealt with are much smaller than is the case with boys, and theft and sex delinquencies constitute by far the largest

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proportion of offences recorded. It follows from this that many if not most of these girls are drawn from the prostitute class and so far, all that the ingenuity of the reformers seems to have accomplished is to attempt to train these girls for laundry work and domestic service. At best laundry work cannot be regarded as inspiring, and as for domestic service it must be remembered that it is only comparatively seldom that girls from industrial schools or rescue homes can obtain situations in first-class houses. Most of them are absorbed into the cheaper sort of boarding-houses and apartments, where not only is life a drudgery, accommodation poor, food not of the best and leisure conspicuous by its absence, but the class of mistress under whom these girls serve is all too ready to cast up the past on the least excuse. Moreover, as Miss van Waters says : "Domestic service for girls is always to be regarded with caution. 'Servant' girls have long hours, monotonous routine, restricted opportunities for harmless social life, few companions of

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their own age and insufficient protection from domestic conflicts in homes where they labour. The hired girl is not part of the family circle, but she is the spectator of the intimacies and subterfuges of modern family life. She must take sides, if silently, between husband and wife, parents and children, brothers and sisters. The family 'cloak' is to her no secret and no shelter, she dwells close to the seamy side. She becomes discouraged and prematurely callous and disillusioned with the home life. In surveys of occupation of girls and women in correctional schools the greatest number have been found to be in domestic service. This is partly due to the fact that home service draws its recruits largely from the ranks of backward, unskilled members of broken families, but it cannot be denied that the servant class is habitually exposed to seduction and lack of proper safeguards."¹ As one distinguished social worker remarked, the problem is to introduce colour and variety into the lives of these

¹ M. van Waters, *Youth in Conflict*, Methuen, 1925.

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girls and show them that these things can be obtained in respectable occupations as well or better than in the underworld. How this problem is to be fully met awaits solution, but perhaps Miss Shaw of the Cope Hall colony for girls near Newbury—that all too short lived experiment—is near the truth when she said to her girls, "I do not know how to help you girls, I have tried to help people like you for many years, but have never felt I was nearer any solution. I believe that you yourselves know what would help you and I am asking you to advise us. I think that quite often when anyone is talking to you, you say to yourselves : ' It is no good her saying or doing things like that, it does not help me one bit.' Now, what can help you ? Do you know, and if so will you tell us ? " We must try to get rid of prejudices and approach the subject afresh. Let it be said that it would be far better for some of these girls to be placed in the chorus of a well-run touring company where they would get plenty of real hard work but also companionship, variety and

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colour, than to become drudges in a boarding-house where they get no variety, no colour and no companionship unless they resume their occupation of prostitution.

All authorities are agreed that the delinquent girl makes a remarkably successful wife and mother and this ideal solution, even though the initial incidents of married life may be checkered, as happened in one case where the wedding breakfast had to be abandoned as the funds which would have covered this social event had to be diverted to bail out the best man. So welcome to the authorities is the chance of marriage for these girls that in a large institution near Buda Pesth the government presents any inmate who is married on discharge with a dowry. It is reported that though this is only forty pengos (about thirty-five shillings), the rise in the marriage market is pronounced, the bridegrooms being chiefly drawn from the young workmen whose services are required from time to time for repairs.

Clubs for young people are undoubtedly

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excellent, and perhaps best of all are the boy scout and girl guide movements, but care must be taken that their proper objects are maintained, namely, to afford healthy recreation, encourage team work, responsibility and *esprit de corps*, and that they should not be used for sectarian or political propaganda.

A discussion of this sort cannot be left without reference to the experiments which have been tried on the lines of the Little Republic where the boys or girls are made to manage everything themselves, making their own rules and maintaining their own discipline, the staff being amenable to this, just as much as are the children. Theoretically, with a striking personality at the head, this idea seems promising, but in practice the experiments have not worked out well, at any rate in this country. That does not mean that they should not be repeated given the right man in the right place, and perhaps, building on the mistakes of the past, some really successful development may ensue.

In any case we have to realize that at

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resent we have not got much beyond the stage of marking out our field of research and it behoves us to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest for a long time before we reach any final conclusions. If somewhat dyspeptic at present over some problems, especially that of the disposal of delinquent girls, we may take comfort from the fact that the public interest is already aroused in the subject and is becoming more general every day. Let us hope that this wholesome stimulus will result ultimately in the disappearance of the problem of delinquency. In order to bring this about we have to cast our eyes much further into the future than has been done in this book. None the less I do not believe that it is impossible to descry over that dim horizon, a time when human heredity is so well understood and human beings are so wise in their instincts, if such an expression may be allowed, that no misfits or defective personalities will be brought into the world. Further that youth will not be hampered by lack of opportunity, but every boy and girl will find some

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niche in the social fabric where they can employ their peculiar talents to the advantage of themselves and the community, and lastly, that the understanding sympathy of the old will be so perfect that for the young the rough places will be made smooth and the crooked lives, if such there be, will be made straight.

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